

**FTA Section 5311 Nonurbanized Area Formula Program
Funding Objectives and Criteria
for the San Francisco Bay Area
Metropolitan Transportation Commission**

I. Funding Principles for the Section 5311 Program

The funding principles are intended to guide our funding decisions and establish the basis for developing the programming process. The funding principles for the Section 5311 program are as follows:

1. *Maintain existing needed transit services:* MTC dedicates capital and operating funds for essential projects and programs in an effort to maintain needed existing transit services.
2. *Provide a reliable, equitable and flexible program:* MTC will use a formula distribution system in an effort to provide a reliable and equitable level of funding to transit operators each year. Policy guidelines will accompany the formula in order to give operators flexibility in selecting projects that are consistent with regional priorities.
3. *Fund basic capital requirements:* MTC will require recipients to prioritize the replacement of capital equipment. If recipients request funds for operations, they will be required to submit documentation explaining why the funds are not needed for basic capital.
4. *Maintain a multi-year program of projects:* In order to foster planning it is important that MTC continue to program projects on a multi-year basis, within the constraints of available federal funding programs and subject to changes within those programs. Whenever possible, MTC will adopt a two-year program, with annual adjustments to constrain the program to the available revenues. Each year's program will only be added to the TIP when actual revenues are apportioned by Caltrans.
5. *Maintain Timely Use of Funds Policy:* The Caltrans policy requires that all FTA Section 5311 funds be obligated within two years of programming or the funds will be lost to the region. In order to avoid lost funds to the region, MTC reserves the right to only program funds to those agencies that have submitted their prior year's 5311 application and quarterly reports to Caltrans satisfactorily and in a timely manner.

II. Funding Formula, Policy Guidelines and Screening Criteria

A. Funding Formula

Funds will be distributed to transit operators according to each operator's nonurbanized area population and nonurbanized area route miles. The formula will distribute half of the funds according to the nonurbanized area population served (i.e., according to the number of nonurbanized area residents that live within three-quarters of a mile of the operators' transit stops) and the other half of the funds according to the number of route miles provided in the

nonurbanized area. The table below shows the formula distribution. Population data for the proposed formula is based on the 2000 Census.

FTA Section 5311 Formula Distribution¹

Transit Operator	Non UA Population (2000) within 3/4-mile of transit stops		Non UA Route Miles		Combined Population and Route Miles Percentage
	Population	Percentage	Miles	Percentage	
AC Transit	23,057	9%	250	5%	7%
CCCTA	10,827	4%	70	1%	3%
LAVTA	8,028	3%	116	2%	3%
Marin Transit ²	16,401	7%	765	15%	11%
NCTPA	20,668	8%	831	17%	12%
Petaluma Transit	2,953	1%	10	0%	1%
SamTrans	22,412	9%	344	7%	8%
Santa Clara VTA	20,174	8%	307	6%	7%
Santa Rosa CityBus	4,143	2%	2	0%	1%
Solano Transportation Authority ³	44,090	18%	1075	21%	20%
Sonoma County Transit	55,337	22%	986	20%	21%
TriDelta Transit	15,623	6%	222	4%	5%
Union City Transit	2,673	1%	4	0%	1%
WestCAT	3,745	1%	45	1%	1%
Total	250,131	100%	5,026	100%	100%

¹ Note: This distribution does not include the proposed minimum award adjustments for FY2012 and FY2013.

² The Marin Transit amount is the sum of the Marin Transit (Local Service) and West Marin Stagecoach amounts. Marin Transit will determine which service will use the 5311 funds.

³ The Solano Transportation Authority amount is the sum of the Dixon, Fairfield and Suisun Transit, Rio Vista Delta Breeze, SolTrans (Vallejo Transit & Benicia Breeze), and Vacaville amounts. The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) will work with these operators to determine individual shares.

B. Policy Guidelines

The following policies will accompany the formula system:

1. *Capital Priority.* Recipients will be required to prioritize the replacement of capital equipment, with top priority for capital assets needed to maintain needed existing transit services. If recipients request funds for operations, they will be required to submit documentation explaining why the funds are not needed to maintain or replace capital equipment. Furthermore, if recipients request funds for operations expansions, they will be required to submit documentation explaining why the funds are not needed to maintain existing transit operations.
2. *Project Justification Sheets.* MTC will program funds only to those operators who submit Section 5311 project justification sheets during the Call for Projects. The Section 5311 project justification sheets will contain basic project information, including project title, brief project description, project type, contact information, total project cost, local match amount and funding source, prior programming information (if the project is already included in the TIP), screening criteria, and, for operations requests, an explanation of why the funds are not needed for basic capital. If an operator does not want to participate in the 5311 program (e.g., if the operator's 5311 share is so small that the administrative effort required to apply for and report on the

funds outweighs the benefits to the operator), then they will not submit Section 5311 project justification sheets, and MTC will not program any funds to that operator.

3. *Minimum award during a transition period.* During the first two years of the new formula-based policy, recent 5311 recipients (e.g., those who received funds in FY2007 through FY2011) will receive the following minimum awards:
 - (a) In the **FY2012** Grant Cycle, transit operators who received 5311 funds in FY2007 through FY2011 will receive no less than **80 percent** of their average award during the FY2007 through FY2011 period
 - (b) In the **FY2013** Grant Cycle, transit operators who received 5311 funds in FY2007 through FY2011 will receive no less than **40 percent** of their average award during the FY2007 through FY2011 period

C. Project Screening Criteria

The project screening criteria are intended to eliminate projects that do not meet minimum program standards. MTC will review each applicant's Project Justification Sheets to ensure that each project proposed for the Section 5311 program of projects meets the following criteria:

1. *Availability to the general public.* Section 5311- funded services may be designed to maximize use by members of the general public who are transportation disadvantaged persons, including elderly and disabled persons, however such services should be open to the general public, or part of an array of public transit services, such as ADA complementary services.
2. *Identified local match.* The applicant must identify a funding source for the minimum required local match. The minimum local match is 44.67% for operations projects, and 11.47% for capital projects.
3. *Identified and documented need for a project.* The need for a particular project must be adequately documented and justified on the Section 5311 project justification sheets (e.g., if an operator is requesting funds to replace a vehicle, the existing vehicle to be replaced must meet the asset replacement age). If the applicant prepares a Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP), the project should be identified and justified in the plan.
4. *Project readiness.* The applicant must be prepared to submit an application for the project and be ready to implement/construct the project in the year indicated in the program of projects. If funds for a project are not applied for in the year they are programmed, future programming of federal funds for that project and applicant could be jeopardized.

5. *Consistency with Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).* The applicant must confirm that the project is consistent with the region's Long Range Plan in effect at the time of the application.

III. Fund Programming and Project Review Process

The steps in developing the region's Section 5311 program of projects are outlined as follows.

MTC will issue a Call for Projects every two years, and will adopt a two-year program. MTC will make annual adjustments to constrain the program to the available revenues. Each year's program will only be added to the TIP when actual revenues are apportioned by Caltrans.

A. Call for Projects Year (first year of two-year program)

- MTC receives estimate of available Section 5311 funding for the first program year from Caltrans. MTC will estimate the amount of Section 5311 funding available for the second program year.
- MTC uses the funding formula to estimate the amount of Section 5311 funds available to each transit operator, based on the assumption that all eligible operators will submit proposed projects.
- MTC notifies all potential Section 5311 applicants of the amount of Section 5311 funds available, including fund estimates by transit operator, and requests that projects be proposed (in project justification sheets) for the program of projects.
- For each proposed project, applicants complete and submit Section 5311 Project Justification Sheets to MTC.
- MTC staff reviews proposed projects and develops a preliminary program of projects. If there are remaining Section 5311 funds (i.e., if some eligible operators did not submit Project Justification Sheets), MTC will use the funding formula to distribute the remaining balance to the operators that proposed projects. MTC will confer with applicants to finalize the program of projects.
- The program of projects is presented to and considered by MTC's Programming and Allocations Committee.
- If approved by the Committee, the program of projects is presented to and considered by MTC's full Commission and upon approval is forwarded to Caltrans.
- When actual revenues are apportioned by Caltrans, MTC will make adjustments (if needed) to constrain the program to the available revenues and add the first year projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

B. Adjustment year (second year of two-year program)

- MTC receives estimate of available Section 5311 funding for the second program year from Caltrans.
- MTC will make adjustments (if needed) to constrain the program to the available revenues. Staff will confer with operators if adjustments are needed.
- If there are changes to a project in the current program (e.g., scope of project, costs, etc.), a revised project justification sheet should be completed and sent to MTC.
- The revised program of projects is presented to and considered by MTC's Programming and Allocations Committee.
- The revised program of projects is presented to and considered by MTC's full Commission and upon approval is forwarded to Caltrans.
- MTC will add the second year projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

In any year, operators are responsible for submitting their own applications to Caltrans. MTC will assist with the Regional Agency/Transportation Planning Agency (TPA) Certifications and Assurances as needed.